Reserving a space on Cape Cod National Seashore ranger-guided programs via Recreation.gov

In July and August staff and partners at Cape Cod National Seashore offer nearly 60 different programs each week. The majority of these programs are free and do not require reservations. Some programs involve a fee due to specialized equipment or staff training required, supply costs, or because they are several hours in duration and therefore involve a higher staff cost than shorter programs. In order to offer these programs, we must charge a fee to cover the costs. Most of the park's fee programs have been placed on the national reservation system, www.recreation.gov. Recreation.gov is the largest outdoor recreation reservation service in the US with over 60,000 reserveable facilities and programs at over 2500 field locations, primarily on federal lands.

Specific reservation information for each program is noted in the Cape Cod National Seashore newspaper, *Park News*. *Park News* is available at the two national seashore visitor centers (Salt Pond in Eastham and Province Lands in Provincetown); park headquarters in Wellfleet; and at many town chamber of commerce booths.

Quick Guide for reserving (suggested for those who have booked with recreation.gov before):

On-line (preferred method for ease in making a reservation):

Go to http://ow.ly/lpkq301vSke no earlier than 10 AM, 7 days in advance of program date Review program details, dates, special instructions, and any applicable age or experience requirements, and select "Book Now"

To avoid error messages, make sure you choose a date that the program is scheduled to occur On-line reservations may be made 24 hours a day after 10 AM, 7 days prior to the program date

By phone:

Call 1-877-444-6777 no earlier than 10 AM, 7 days in advance of program date Follow prompts and select 1 for "Tickets and Tours"

Tell the reservation specialist you want to book a tour at Cape Cod National Seashore, and provide specific tour/program name as listed in the park's ranger-guided program materials

Take note of all special instructions and any applicable age or experience requirements before completing reservation

The call center is open 10 AM to midnight

Detailed Instructions (advised for those who have never reserved with recreation.gov before): Reserving with recreation.gov on-line:

Visit http://ow.ly/lpkq301vSke. This link takes you directly to a listing of all programs that can be reserved at Cape Cod National Seashore via recreation.gov, as well as days of the week and times the programs are offered. Select "Book Now" on this page to begin making a reservation. Note that some programs are tide-dependent and have variable times. Reservations may be made beginning at 10 AM 7 days in advance, and 24 hours a day thereafter.

Reserving with recreation.gov by phone:

Call 1-877-444-6777, no earlier than 10 AM 7 days in advance of the program. The call center hours are 10:00 AM EST to Midnight EST. Follow the prompts and select 1 for "Tickets and Tours" to be connected to a reservation specialist. To expedite your reservation, tell the representative that you're requesting a reservation at Cape Cod National Seashore and provide the exact tour name noted in *Park News*—eg. Yoga at the Cove; Fish, Snails, and Horseshoe Crab Tales; Canoe Trip: Salt Pond Paddle; Snorkel:

Underwater Worlds; Surfcasting 101, etc. The call center occasionally experiences periods of especially high call volume, and you may be advised to try calling at another time.

Same-day reservations:

Some programs that depart between mid-morning and the end of the day may have space available after the recreation.gov reservation period has closed. To check on availability for same-day reservations, call or stop by Salt Pond Visitor Center (508-255-3421, ext. 0) for programs in Eastham and Wellfleet, or Province Lands Visitor Center (508-487-1256) for programs in Truro and Provincetown.

Some tips to facilitate making your reservation:

- Have Park News or the park's ranger program listing handy to expedite the reservation process.
- Payment must be made by credit card at the time you make the reservation.
- If reserving online, you must establish an account. This is a simple process involving just a username and password.
- The reservation cut-off time varies among the national seashore programs—4:30 PM or midnight the day before for some programs, and one or two hours in advance of the program start time for others. Some programs have limited capacity and fill well in advance.
- Some programs have minimum age requirements. These are noted in *Park News* and online. If reserving by phone, the reservation specialist will advise. The requirement is based on program content, physical ability, or equipment that is provided. Please respect the minimum age requirement. Rangers may remove a participant from a program if under the specified age.
- Canoe Trip: Paddling Adventure requires prior canoeing experience. Snorkel: Underwater Worlds requires swimming ability. These requirements are for your safety and for the safety of the group. Please respect these experience/ability requirements. Rangers may remove a participant from a program if s/he cannot demonstrate the required experience/ability and is jeopardizing program safety or quality for other participants.
- All programs require that minor children be accompanied by an adult.
- Some programs require specific clothing or equipment, such as water shoes, a towel, drinking
 water, comfortable walking shoes, or bug spray. These are listed in *Park News* and online. If
 reserving by phone, the reservation specialist will advise. Bring these items with you.
- Reservations are non-refundable. If national seashore staff must cancel a program for safety reasons, such as small craft warnings or an impending electrical storm, you will receive a full refund, including the reservation fee.
- Outdoor programs typically go rain or shine.
- When making a reservation, provide the phone number where you can be reached in the event of last-minute program cancellation. Often, this is a cell phone.
- If you attempt to reserve online more than 7 days in advance, you will receive a message "Not on sale yet." If you enter a date in error (ie. you choose a Wednesday for a tour that is offered on Thursday) you will receive an error message. In these instances, confirm the date and day of week in *Park News*.
- Reservations may not be made for parties of more than 8 persons. This is to retain program quality for all participants by not having any one group overwhelm the program.
- In an effort to improve the reservation experience, rangers may ask for feedback about the reservation process. In addition, if you encountered any difficultly, please share this with a ranger at a visitor center, or with the ranger leading your program.

We look forward to sharing the wonders of the national seashore with you!